

Illustrated Tour Of Southern Ireland - 13 January 2001

Ralph's holiday last year took him round nearly every standing stone in Southern Ireland, accompanied somewhat reluctantly by his wife. But they are returning this summer so it can't have been that bad! There appeared to be millions of them in his slide show, though he reckons there are more to visit.

The one in the illustration* is typical: fairly small, equal sized stones, squared but not pointed. One quite differently shaped stone at the entrance on the east side, where the sun rises, and a flat altar stone opposite on the west side. It dates from about 2000 BC.

En route to yet another group of standing stones Ralph encountered ruined medieval abbeys and beehive huts, all standing in countryside of breathtaking beauty. There was masses of thrift and many other lovely plants, basking in the wonderful sunshine. Waterfalls were there one day, after overnight rain, and gone the next.

The beehive huts are made of stone and look just like beehives, but were in fact home to stone age man.

Southern Ireland is largely uninhabited and unspoilt. In the towns the houses are strikingly painted in bright blues, reds, greens and yellows, and look amazing.

He did manage one Ricardian connection, as the slide show opened with scenes of Cork, where Perkin Warbeck landed and won support as Richard, Duke of York, the youngest of the two Princes in the Tower. Unfortunately the exact location of the dock where he came ashore is unrecorded, so we had to content ourselves with being in the right area.

This was one of our best attended meetings, due to it having general appeal, and Ralph's reputation as a presenter. Thanks Ralph for brightening up a grey January day.

The £25 entrance money went to the church appeal at St Leonard's Church Beoley, to buy a glass screen to put between the bell ringing area and the nave, to stop the draughts.

*Not included in this .pdf file, only available in the magazine.